United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency presents to General Assembly annual report for 1990, saying IAEA's work in Iraq proved "to be much larger, complex and dramatic than first expected".

◆ Secretary-General's Personal Representative expresses "deep concern" over situation in Yugoslavia; says Security Council's arms embargo "is not working".

◆ Secretary-General welcomes Middle East Peace Conference scheduled for 30 October in Madrid.

◆ Secretary-General holds informal consultations with Governments concerned in Afghanistan situation.

◆ Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme launches global strategy for sustainable development called "Caring for the Earth".

◆ Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports 300 dead and 2000 injured by earthquake in India.

◆ "Group of 77" introduces two draft resolutions in Economic and Financial Committee on economic stabilization programmes in developing countries and on industrial development cooperation.

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The tasks laid upon the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by the Security Council's resolutions on Iraq "proved to be much larger, complex and dramatic than first expected", according to IAEA Director General Hans Blix who presented the Agency's annual report for 1990 to the General Assembly this afternoon.

Mr. Blix said in his statement that although Iraq was a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and had pledged under that Treaty not to develop or acquire any nuclear weapons, the country had been found not to have respected these pledges. The IAEA Board of Governors had twice declared Iraq in

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non-compliance with its safeguards obligations and the General Conference of the IAEA last month had condemned Iraq's non-compliance with its nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

The seven inspection missions sent so far by the IAEA to Iraq, Mr. Blix said, had disclosed vast undeclared and unknown programmes in the billion dollar range for the enrichment of uranium as well as documentary evidence of an advanced nuclear weapons development programme. Although Iraq had asserted that no political decision had been taken to make a nuclear bomb, the scientific and technical programme for weapons development had been confirmed, he said.

Speaking about what lessons could be learned from IAEA's inspections in Iraq, Mr. Blix cited the "crucial importance of information" provided by other Member States, through the Special Commission, designating suspected sites for inspection. He also cited the importance of inspectors' unimpeded access to those sites, as well as the value of powerful support when the right to access was not respected.

The General Assembly will continue its debate of the IAEA's annual report tomorrow.

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The situation in Yugoslavia was worsening and time was "running out rapidly", according to the Secretary-General's Personal Representative for Yugoslavia, former United States Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who has just returned from a ten-day fact-finding mission to Belgrade and other European cities.

Mr. Vance met with Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar over the weekend to inform him of his visit to Europe, during which he has met with Yugoslav Government representatives and European leaders.

At a press conference on Saturday, Mr. Vance told correspondents that he had returned from his mission more deeply concerned than when he left. He said that during his trip fighting had escalated, although press reports had announced the beginning of a cease-fire at noon Saturday -- the tenth such cease-fire in Yugoslavia in the past three months.

There was no longer any effective central Government in Yugoslavia, Mr. Vance said. The economic situation continued to worsen and human suffering was increasing, as reflected in the rapidly growing number of refugees, displaced persons and medical casualties.

Asked by correspondents if he knew the source of arms flowing into Yugoslavia, Mr. Vance replied that he did not know precisely; he was still collecting information on that matter. He said it was clear that the Security Council's arms embargo was not working and that arms were flowing into the area from many different directions.

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Also present at the press conference, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said he was preparing a report containing his recommendations to the Security Council. Asked if Mr. Vance would return to Yugoslavia, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar replied that his Personal Envoy had the confidence of all the parties he had met. "That is extremely important, not only for us, but for Yugoslavia", he said. Mr. Vance would be involved as long as long as the problem was there, and as long as the United Nations could be of any help, the Secretary-General said.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has welcomed the convening of the Middle East peace conference scheduled to begin on 30 October in Madrid.

Speaking to correspondents on Saturday, the Secretary-General called the diplomatic work done over the months by United States Secretary of State James A. Baker III "a remarkable success".

The Secretary-General said he would contribute to the peace efforts by sending his Special Representative on the Middle East, Eduard Brunner, to Madrid as an observer, together with a small team, in order to be present during the opening session of the Conference.

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A United Nations spokeswoman announced today that the Secretary-General had been holding informal consultations with Governments concerned in the Afghanistan situation, with a view to accelerate the process for a political settlement and prior to the General Assembly's consideration of the item.

The spokeswoman said Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar had exchanged views on Friday, 18 October, with representatives of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union and the United States. The Secretary-General's Personal Representative on Afghanistan, Benon Sevan, left on Sunday for the region.

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A global strategy for sustainable development entitled "Caring for the Earth" was launched today at United Nations Headquarters by Mostafa K. Tolba, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Released simultaneously in London, Moscow, Tokyo, Sydney and 55 other cities around the world, the 228-page strategy prepared by UNEP lists 130 things that communities can do to safeguard or improve their environments, while raising their quality of life.

In a statement to mark the occasion, Dr. Tolba said "we must, by improving the standard of living in developing countries, put an end to the poverty and desperation that are forcing millions of men and women to degrade or destroy their own fertile lands and forests and coastal areas".

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The new international blueprint calls on the industrialized countries to lower their high levels of consumption and pollution, and to reduce the debt of lower-income countries.

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The Geneva-based Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) has reported a major earthquake yesterday in India in a mountainous area, approximately 250 kilometres north-east of New Delhi.

The Agency said the death toll was over 300, with 2000 people injured. Early reports indicated that worst damage was inflicted in Uttarkashi and Tehri districts, where remote villages could not be reached due to extensive damage to the infrastructure. Local relief efforts, including the deployment of military resources and dispatch of relief material, was hampered by inaccessibility of the affected area, the UNDRO said.

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The General Assembly's Second Committee (Economical and Financial) this morning heard an introduction by the "Group of 77" developing countries of two draft resolutions on economic stabilization programmes in developing countries and on industrial development cooperation, respectively. The Committee is currently debating the question of development and international economic cooperation.

By one draft, on economic stabilization programmes in developing countries, sponsored by Ghana, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to it at its next session a comprehensive and analytical report containing an evaluation of the extent to which the efforts made by developing countries to stabilize their economies were being supported by the current international economic environment.

By the second text, on industrial development cooperation with developing countries, also sponsored by Ghana, the Assembly would recognize the need for a study on the structure of world industrialization from the long-term perspective.

In a separate development, the Economic and Financial Committee also considered this morning the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in promoting enterpreneurship, including its establishment of a new division for private sector development.

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